

BEFORE THE
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA

In Re:)	
)	
Continued Availability of Unbundled High)	
Capacity Loops at Certain Locations and)	Docket No. 2003-327-C
Unbundled High Capacity Transport on)	
Certain Routes Pursuant to the Federal)	
Communications Commission's Triennial)	
Review Order)	

**RESPONSES OF TALK AMERICA, INC. TO
BELLSOUTH'S FIRST REQUESTS FOR PRODUCTION OF DOCUMENTS**

Talk America Inc. ("Talk"), pursuant to the Rules and Regulations of the Public Service Commission of South Carolina ("Commission") and pursuant to the Code of Laws of South Carolina, hereby generally and specifically objects to BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc.'s ("BellSouth") First Requests for Production of Documents (Nos. 1-4). The objections stated herein are general and specific and are made at this time for the purpose of complying with the procedures adopted by the Commission for this proceeding. Any answer that Talk may provide in response to the BellSouth discovery will be provided subject to, and without waiver of, these objections. Talk reserves the right to amend, supplement, or revise these objections, and to assert additional objections should Talk discover additional grounds for objecting as Talk prepares its responses to any BellSouth discovery, or at any time prior to hearing.

I. General Objections

Talk makes the following General Objections to BellSouth's First Requests for Production of Documents, including the applicable definitions and

instructions therein ("BellSouth discovery"), which as appropriate, will be incorporated into each relevant response when such responses are served on BellSouth.

1. Talk objects to the BellSouth discovery to the extent that such discovery seeks to impose an obligation on Talk to respond on behalf of its subsidiaries and affiliates, or other persons that are not parties to this case on the grounds that such discovery is overly broad, unduly burdensome, oppressive, and not permitted by applicable discovery rules. Talk further objects to any and all BellSouth discovery that seeks to obtain information from Talk for Talk subsidiaries, affiliates, or other related Talk entities that are not certificated by the Commission. BellSouth's definitions of "you", "your" and "Talk" are examples of BellSouth's attempt to impose the above-referenced obligation on Talk.

2. Talk has interpreted the BellSouth discovery to apply to Talk's regulated intrastate operations in South Carolina and will limit its responses accordingly. To the extent that any BellSouth discovery is intended to apply to matters that take place outside the state of South Carolina and which are not related to Talk's South Carolina intrastate operations subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission, Talk objects to such request as irrelevant, overly broad, unduly burdensome, and oppressive.

3. Talk objects to the BellSouth discovery to the extent that such discovery calls for information which is exempt from discovery by virtue

of the attorney-client privilege, work product privilege, or other applicable privilege.

4. Talk objects to the BellSouth discovery insofar as such discovery is vague, ambiguous, overly broad, imprecise, or utilizes terms that are subject to multiple interpretations and are not properly defined or explained for purposes of these requests. Any responses provided by Talk in response to BellSouth discovery will be provided subject to, and without waiver of, the foregoing objection.

5. Talk objects to the BellSouth discovery insofar as such discovery is not reasonably calculated to lead to the discovery of admissible evidence and is not relevant to the subject matter of this action.

6. Talk objects to the BellSouth discovery insofar as it seeks information or documents, or seeks to impose obligations on Talk which exceed the requirements of the Rules and Regulations of the Commission or South Carolina law.

7. Talk objects to providing information to the extent that such information is already in the public record before the Commission, the FCC, is otherwise publicly available, or which is already in the possession, custody, or control of BellSouth.

8. Talk objects to the BellSouth discovery to the extent that such discovery is overly broad, unduly burdensome, expensive, oppressive, or excessively time consuming as written.

9. Talk objects to each and every request to the extent that the information requested constitutes "trade secrets," confidential or proprietary information, which are privileged or exempt from public disclosure pursuant to applicable South Carolina law or rules of the Commission.

10. In the course of its business, Talk creates countless documents that are not subject to Commission or FCC retention of records requirements. These documents are kept in numerous locations and are frequently moved from site to site as employees change jobs or as the business is reorganized. Therefore, it is possible that not every document has been identified in response to these requests. Talk will conduct a reasonable and diligent search of those files that are reasonably expected to contain the requested information. To the extent that the BellSouth discovery purports to require more, Talk objects on the grounds that compliance would impose an undue burden or expense.

11. Talk objects to the BellSouth discovery that seeks to obtain "all," "each," or "every" document, item, customer, or other such piece of information to the extent that such discovery is overly broad and unduly burdensome. Any answers that Talk may provide in response to the BellSouth discovery will be provided subject to, and without waiver of, this objection.

12. Talk objects to the BellSouth discovery to the extent such discovery seeks to have Talk create documents not in existence at the time of the request.

13. Talk objects to the BellSouth discovery as overly broad and unduly burdensome to the extent that such discovery is not limited to any stated period of time or a stated period of time that is longer than is relevant for purposes of the issues in this docket.

14. In light of the short period of time Talk has been afforded to respond to the BellSouth discovery, the development of the Talk positions and potentially responsive information to the BellSouth requests is necessarily ongoing and continuing. This process is further complicated since at this point in time, the actual issues to be set forth for hearing in this docket have not yet been established by order of the Commission. Accordingly, these are preliminary objections to comply with the CompSouth/BellSouth Joint Procedural Motion and Talk reserves the right to supplement, revise, or modify its objections at the time that it serves its actual responses to the BellSouth discovery. However, Talk does not assume an affirmative obligation to supplement answers on an ongoing basis, contrary to the BellSouth General Instruction.

15. Talk objects to BellSouth's First Requests for Production to Talk to the extent that the Requests purport to seek discovery of information and/or materials containing the mental impressions, conclusions, opinions or legal theories of any attorney or other representative of Talk concerning the subject of the proceeding and prepared and developed in anticipation of litigation pursuant to South Carolina law without the requisite showing from BellSouth that

the denial of production or inspection will unfairly prejudice BellSouth in preparing its claim or defense or will cause BellSouth undue hardship or injustice.

16. Talk objects to the BellSouth discovery to the extent that the definitions operate to seek discovery of matters other than those subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission, pursuant to the FCC's Triennial Review Order, Commission regulations and South Carolina Law.

17. Talk objects to the BellSouth discovery to the extent that it asks for information that may not be available in precisely the same format, category, or definitions from Talk systems, which systems are limited in terms of their capacity to produce unlimited reports and information in any format, category or definition requested.

II. Specific Objections

Talk makes the following Specific Objections to the BellSouth discovery, which as appropriate will be incorporated into each relevant response when Talk's responses are served on BellSouth.

18. Talk objects to each and every request for production that seeks information regarding Talk's operations in ILEC service areas other than the BellSouth ILEC service area within the state of South Carolina as such information is irrelevant to BellSouth's case in this docket and such discovery is overly broad and unduly burdensome.

19. Talk objects to each and every request for production that seeks to obtain information regarding "former officers, employees, agents,

directors, and all other persons acting or purporting to act on behalf of Talk” as such information is not within Talk’s control, would be unduly burdensome to attempt to obtain and is likely irrelevant.

20. To the extent that BellSouth’s discovery requests specific financial, business or proprietary data regarding Talk’s economic business model, Talk objects to providing any such information on the grounds that those requests presume the market entry analysis is contingent upon Talk’s economic business model instead of a hypothetical business model contemplated by the Triennial Review Order and such information is confidential and proprietary to Talk.

21. Outside of the discovery request served by BellSouth, there have been discussions between BellSouth and some of the CLECs that this discovery is “regional” in nature and that BellSouth would prefer that the CLECs respond on a regional basis without additional service in these other states. At this point in time, without necessarily agreeing or disagreeing with BellSouth’s request for regional answers, Talk reserves its rights to object to providing responsive information for states other than South Carolina. Further, in the event Talk does provide responsive information for states other than South Carolina pursuant to the discovery in this South Carolina docket, Talk reserves its rights to not provide such non-South Carolina information in the South Carolina Commission docket. Finally, in the event Talk does provide information for states other than South Carolina pursuant to the discovery in this South Carolina

Commission docket, Talk reserves its rights to provide such non-South Carolina information on a schedule other than that provided solely for this Commission docket.

22. Talk objects to the production of documents regarding any interrogatory to which Talk has objected.

III. Responses to Requests Subject to Objections

Talk incorporates its General Objections and Specific Objections herein. Subject to and without waiving those objections, Talk provides the following specific responses to BellSouth's requests:

1. Produce any maps and/or diagrams that illustrate the most current information available for the physical location of your high capacity transport and/or loop facilities within the Southeastern states.

RESPONSE: Talk currently does not have high capacity transport and/or loop facilities in the Southeastern states.

2. Produce any documents identified in your responses to BellSouth's First Set of Interrogatories in this docket.

RESPONSE: Talk incorporates its General Objections and Specific Objections herein. Notwithstanding the foregoing, Talk has no documents responsive to this request.

3. Produce any business case from 2000 to present in your possession, custody, or control that evaluates, discusses, analyzes or otherwise refers or relates to your actual or planned deployment of high capacity transport and/or loop facilities within the Southeastern states.

RESPONSE: Talk incorporates its General Objections and Specific Objections herein. Notwithstanding the foregoing, Talk has no documents responsive to this request.

4. Produce any business case from 2000 to present in your possession, custody, or control that evaluates, discusses, analyzes or otherwise refers or

relates to your obtaining high capacity transport and/or loop facilities from other persons.

RESPONSE: Talk incorporates its General Objections and Specific Objections herein. Notwithstanding the foregoing, Talk has no documents responsive to this request.

5. Produce all documents from 2000 to present referring or relating to how you determine whether or not to deploy high capacity transport and/or loop facilities.

RESPONSE: Talk incorporates its General Objections and Specific Objections herein. Notwithstanding the foregoing, Talk has no documents responsive to this request.

Respectfully submitted this 14 day of January, 2004.

SOWELL GRAY STEPP & LAFFITTE, L.L.C.

By: Robert E. Tyson, Jr.
Robert E. Tyson, Jr., Esq.
1310 Gadsden Street (29201)
Post Office Box 11449
Columbia, South Carolina 29211
Telephone: (803) 929-1400
Facsimile: (803) 231-7888
rtyson@sowell.com

Brett Heather Freedson
KELLEY DRYE & WARREN, L.L.P.
1200 Nineteenth Street, NW
Suite 500
Washington, D.C. 20036
Telephone: (202) 887-1211
bfreedson@kelleydrye.com

Attorneys for Talk America, Inc.

Columbia, South Carolina

January 14, 2004

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, the undersigned of the law offices of Sowell Gray Stepp & Laffitte, L.L.C., attorneys for Talk America, Inc., do hereby certify that I have served a copy of the pleading(s) hereinbelow specified via e-mail to the following address(es):

Pleadings: Responses of Talk America, Inc. to BellSouth's First Requests for Production of Documents (Docket No. 2003-327-C)

Counsel Served:

F. David Butler, Esquire
South Carolina Public Service Commission
Post Office Drawer 11649
Columbia, South Carolina 29211
david.butler@psc.state.sc.us

The Honorable Bruce Duke
Acting Executive Director
South Carolina Public Service Commission
Post Office Drawer 11649
Columbia, South Carolina 29211
bruce.duke@psc.state.sc.us

Robert E. Tyson, Jr., Esquire
Sowell Gray Stepp & Laffitte, L.L.C.
Post Office Box 11449
Columbia, South Carolina 29211
rtyson@sowell.com

Counsel for Intervenors Competitive Carriers of the South, Inc.
("CompSouth"); KMC Telecom III, LLC ("KMC"), ITC^DeltaCom Communications, Inc. (ITC^DeltaCom)

Patrick W. Turner, Esquire
BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc.
Post Office Box 752
Columbia, South Carolina 29202
patrick.turner@bellsouth.com
Counsel for BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc.

Elliott F. Elam, Jr. Esquire
South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs
Post Office Box 5757
Columbia, South Carolina 29250-5757
Elam@dca.state.sc.us
Counsel for Intervenor Consumer Advocate

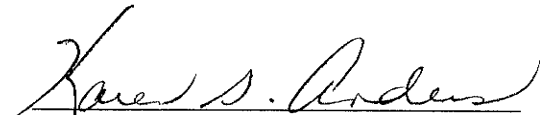
M. John Bowen, Jr., Esquire
Margaret M. Fox, Esquire
McNair Law Firm, P.A.
Post Office Box 11390
Columbia, South Carolina 29211
jbowen@mcnair.net
pfox@mcnair.net
Counsel for Intervenor The South Carolina Telephone Coalition

Darra W. Cothran, Esquire
Woodward, Cothran & Herndon
Post Office Box 12399
Columbia, South Carolina 29211
dwcothran@wchlawn.com
Counsel for Intervenor MCI WorldCom Communications, Inc., Intermedia Communications, Inc. and MCIMetro Access Transmission Service, LLC

John J. Pringle, Jr., Esquire
Ellis, Lawhorne & Sims, P.A.
1501 Main Street, Fifth Floor
Post Office Box 2285
Columbia, South Carolina 29202
jpringle@ellislawhorne.com
Counsel for Intervenor AT&T Communications of the Southern State, L.L.C. ("AT&T"); Xspedius Communications, LLC ("Xspedius")

Scott Elliott, Esquire
Elliott & Elliott, P.A.
721 Olive Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29205
selliott@mindspring.com
Counsel for Intervenor United Telephone Company of the Carolinas and Sprint Communications Company, L.P.

Also e-mail:
daphne.werts@psc.state.sc.us
deborah.easterling@psc.state.sc.us
florence.belser@psc.state.sc.us
bfreedson@kelleydrye.com


Karen S. Anders

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